



2001 Census: Media Background Information, Jul 2001

MEDIA RELEASE

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Attention: Chiefs of Staff and News Editors

News Backgrounder

2001 CENSUS: Media background information

After almost six years of wide-ranging preparation, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is ready to conduct the 2001 Census of Population and Housing on Tuesday 7 August, 2001.

The Census is the five yearly official count of the Australian population. It seeks information vital to the effective planning of Australia's future by governments, community organisations and the business sector.

Planning of services like transport, schools, hospitals, parks, shops, migrant services, centres for the elderly and housing developments, depend on locality level summary statistics produced from the Census. No individual or household is identifiable from these statistics.

This will be the fourteenth national census since Federation, the last being carried out in August 1996. Everyone in Australia, including tourists and visitors from overseas, will be part of the 2001 snapshot of Australia. (more information www.census.gov.au/overview)

Census Collectors will be delivering census forms from 28 July and will be collecting the forms from 8 August, 2001. All Census Collectors will wear an official identification badge, with photograph, and carry a large yellow Census bag for additional easy identification.

Collectors are trained to assist and advise householders on completing 50 questions on the census household form. (more information www.census.gov.au/questions)

Information leaflets about the 2001 Census will be available in 22 languages - English, Arabic, Chinese, Croatian, Farsi, Greek, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Macedonian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Thai, Turkish, Vietnamese, Somali and Bosnian. The decision on which languages to translate for a national approach was based on demographic and migration data. (pdf files of translated fact sheets available at www.census.gov.au/community)

The Census Inquiry Service will operate from 28 July 2001 to provide help and information. A telephone interpreter service will also be available as well as a Telephone Typewriter service to

assist people with hearing impairments. The number of the Census Inquiry Service will be advertised on television and in newspapers closer to Census Day. A new public information website is available at www.abs.gov.au/census.

To commemorate Australia's Centenary of Federation, personally-identifiable 2001 Census information, of those people who indicate consent on their census forms, will be kept for 99 years in a "census time capsule" and stored securely by the National Archives of Australia. All other name-identified data from the census is destroyed after census processing is complete.

Resources and assistance to media

- Background material has been written to assist media in their coverage of the 2001 Census and the Census Time Capsule.
- A series of newsworthy, accurate and timely media releases will be issued commencing today.
- Comprehensive file footage has been supplied to networks. A CD ROM of high resolution census images is available.
- Visit **www.abs.gov.au/news** & **media** for media releases, articles, fact sheets, images and story angles.
- ABS census public affairs staff, both at the National Census Communications Unit in Canberra and in all States and Territories, will help wherever, whenever we can.

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